

June 16, 2008

**[FINAL SCRIPT -- MINNESOTA MILITARY  
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT  
CEREMONY]**

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**1400 – WELCOME (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT CEREMONY. I AM HARRY SIEBEN, AND I SERVE AS MINNESOTA'S CIVILIAN AIDE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

BEFORE WE BEGIN, PLEASE JOIN ME IN A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR EXCEPTIONAL MUSICAL PRELUDE FROM THE 34<sup>TH</sup> "RED BULL" INFANTRY DIVISION BAND.

PLEASE STAND FOR THE ENTRANCE OF THE OFFICIAL PARTY.

**<FOUR RUFFLES AND FLOURISHES AND HONORS MARCH>**

WE ARE HERE TODAY TO HONOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES IN MINNESOTA AND TO REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT AS A STATE TO SUSTAINING THE SUPPORT FOR MINNESOTA SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN, MARINES AND COASTGUARDSMEN WHO SERVE US OUR STATE AND NATION WITH SO MUCH DISTINCTION.

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**1402 – INTRO NATIONAL ANTHEM (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

I ASK YOU TO REMAIN STANDING AND DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION TO OUR  
NATIONAL AND STATE COLORS.

THE 34<sup>TH</sup> RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION BAND WILL NOW PERFORM OUR  
NATIONAL ANTHEM .

**<NATIONAL ANTHEM>**

THANK YOU, 34<sup>TH</sup> RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION BAND.

**1405 – INTRO PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING AS \_\_\_\_\_ LEADS US IN THE  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

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TO THE FLAG

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AND TO THE REPUBLIC

FOR WHICH IT STANDS

ONE NATION

UNDER GOD

INDIVISABLE

WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.

THANK YOU, \_\_\_\_\_ . PLEASE BE SEATED. AGAIN,

WELCOME TO THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

COVENANT CEREMONY. THE PURPOSE OF TODAY'S GATHERING IS TO

PUBLICALLY DEMONSTRATE OUR SUPPORT OF MINNESOTA'S MILITARY

MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES BY MAKING A COMMITMENT – A COVENANT –

BETWEEN OUR LEADERS AND OUR SERVICE MEMBERS.

LET ME WELCOME THOSE THAT ARE WITH US TODAY.

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FIRST AND FOREMOST – LET’S RECOGNIZE THE SERVICE MEMBERS,  
FAMILIES, AND KIDS JOINING ME AT THE PODIUM. WE ARE GRATEFUL THAT  
YOU ARE HERE – YOU REPRESENT WHAT TODAY’S CEREMONY IS ALL ABOUT.

THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD,  
GOVERNOR TIM PAWLENTY.

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY, THE HONORABLE PETE GEREN.

THE MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE, MARK RICHIE.

THE MINNESOTA COMMISSIONER OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, CLARK DYRUD.

THE MINNESOTA DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SUSAN  
HEEGAARD.

THE CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU, LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
STEVEN BLUM.

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THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF MINNESOTA, MAJOR GENERAL LARRY  
SHELLITO.

THE COMMANDER OF THE MINNESOTA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S 34<sup>TH</sup>  
INFANTRY DIVISION, MAJOR GENERAL RICK NASH.

THE COMMANDER OF THE US ARMY RESERVE'S 88<sup>TH</sup> REGIONAL  
READINESS COMMAND, MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT POLLMANN.

THE COMMANDER OF THE US AIR FORCE RESERVE'S 934<sup>TH</sup> AIRLIFT WING,  
COLONEL TIM TARCHICK.

REPRESENTING THE MINNEAPOLIS US NAVAL AND MARINE CORPS CENTER,  
LIEUTENANT EVAN STANLEY.

REPRESENTING CURRENT SERVICE MEMBERS IN MINNESOTA, CAPTAIN  
KRISTEN AUGE'.

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THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER IN MINNESOTA, COMMAND SERGEANT  
MAJOR SCOTT MILLS.

REPRESENTING MILITARY CHILDREN, DERRICK THINGVOLD. DERRICK'S  
DAD GREG IS COMMANDING A ST. PAUL-BASED HELICOPTER BATTALION IN  
IRAQ.

FINALLY, REPRESENTING MILITARY SPOUSES, SARA THINGVOLD. LIKE  
DERRICK, SARA CAN'T WAIT FOR GREG AND THE MORE THAN 200  
MINNESOTANS WITH HIM TO RETURN HOME LATER THIS SUMMER.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE.

**1407 – INTRO INVOCATION (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

LET'S BEGIN WITH OUR INVOCATION BY THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD  
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHAPLAIN -- CHAPLAIN (COLONEL) VERN  
ANDERSON.

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**1407 – INVOCATION (CH (LTC) ANDERSON)**

**<INVOCATION>**

**1409 – INTRO MG SHELLITO (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

THANK YOU, CHAPLAIN ANDERSON. IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO INTRODUCE THE  
ADJUTANT GENERAL OF MINNESOTA. MAJOR GENERAL LARRY SHELLITO.

**1410 – MG SHELLITO REMARKS**

THANKS, GENERAL SIEBEN, AND THANKS GOVERNOR PAWLENTY,  
SECRETARY GEREN, CONGRESSMAN KLINE, SECRETARY OF STATE RICHIE,  
GENERAL BLUM, FELLOW COMMISSIONERS, AND MILITARY AND FAMILY  
LEADERS WHO ARE WITH US HERE TODAY.

TODAY’S SIGNING IS AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD FOR ALL BRANCHES AND  
COMPONENTS OF MILITARY SERVICE. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT OUR TROOPS  
ARE THE “STRENGTH OF THE NATION.” WHILE THAT IS TRUE, THE

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STRENGTH THAT IS WITHIN OUR MINNESOTA SERVICE MEMBERS COMES FROM THEIR FAMILIES, EMPLOYERS, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES.

THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT RECOGNIZES THE INCREASING SACRIFICES THAT OUR SERVICE MEMBERS ARE MAKING EVERY DAY AND LAYS OUT SPECIFIC ACTIONS THAT BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP CAN DO TO SUSTAIN THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS THAT WORK, EXPAND ON THOSE THAT NEED IT, AND CREATE AN EVEN HIGHER SENSE OF AWARENESS AMONG THE GREAT CITIZENS OF MINNESOTA.

WE HAVE MUCH TO BE PROUD OF HERE IN MINNESOTA WHEN IT COMES TO TAKING CARE OF OUR SERVICE MEMBERS. OUR PIONEERING “BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON” PROGRAM LED THE NATION AS A MODEL FOR REINTEGRATING TROOPS AS THEY RETURN FROM COMBAT TOURS. I SEE DAILY THE APPRECIATION FROM MINNESOTANS AS THEY THANK THOSE THAT SERVE IN UNIFORM. THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT WILL FURTHER INSTITUTIONALIZE THIS SUPPORT AND LAY A GROUND WORK FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

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I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD OF THE COMMITMENT OF ESTABLISHING “YELLOW RIBBON COMMUNITIES” THROUGHOUT THE STATE. ALONG WITH OUR PARTNERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD WILL DEVOTE SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO TOWNS, CITIES, AND COUNTIES ACROSS MINNESOTA ON HOW THEY CAN BEST SERVE OUR SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES DURING THIS TIME OF WAR.

AGAIN THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT AND YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO SERVE IN UNIFORM.

**1415 – INTRO MUSIC INTERLUDE (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

THANK YOU GENERAL SHELLITO. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, A MUSICAL INTERLUDE BY THE 34<sup>TH</sup> RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION BAND.

**<4 MINUTES – “I AM THE NATION” >**

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**1419 – INTRO SEC. GEREN (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

THANK YOU, 34<sup>TH</sup> RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION BAND. IT IS AN HONOR TO INTRODUCE THE SENIOR CIVILIAN APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT TO OVERSEE THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE HONORABLE PETE GEREN, THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

**1420 – SEC. GEREN REMARKS**

**<MR. GEREN REMARKS>**

**1425 – INTRO GOV. PAWLENTY (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

THANK YOU, MR. SECRETARY. PLEASE WELCOME THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD, THE GOVERNOR OF MINNESOTA, GOVERNOR TIM PAWLENTY

**1425 – GOV PAWLENTY REMARKS**

**<GOV. PAWLENTY REMARKS>**

**1430 – READ / SIGN THE COVENANT (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

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THANK YOU, GOVERNOR. AS I READ THE TEXT OF THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT, I ASK EACH OF OUR SIGNERS TO COME FORWARD AND SIGN THE DOCUMENT OF SUPPORT.

**<NOTE: STAFF WILL ESCORT THE SIGNERS, ONE AT A TIME, AS MAJ. GEN. SIEBEN READS THE DOCUMENT>**

**THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU AND STATE OF MINNESOTA RECOGNIZE:**

- THE COMMITMENT AND INCREASING SACRIFICES THAT OUR MILITARY FAMILIES ARE MAKING EVERY DAY.
- THE STRENGTH OF OUR SERVICE MEMBERS COMES FROM THE STRENGTH OF THEIR FAMILIES.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY & NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU ARE COMMITTED TO:**

- SUSTAINING AND IMPROVING FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTERS FOR FAMILIES FROM ALL MILITARY SERVICES.

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- EXPANDING OUR SERVICES TO ASSIST WOUNDED WARRIORS AND FAMILIES IN TRANSITIONING BACK TO SOCIETY.
- PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO CONTINUE “*BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON*” TRAINING PROGRAMS.
- PROVIDING FULL-TIME MANNING FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD TO PLAN AND EXECUTE TRAINING TO SUPPORT FAMILIES AND SERVICE MEMBERS THROUGHOUT THE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE.

**THE GOVERNOR OF MINNESOTA IS COMMITTED TO:**

- ESTABLISHING A MINNESOTA DIRECTOR OF MILITARY REINTEGRATION TO COORDINATE THE STATE’S EFFORTS IN TRAINING AND SUPPORTING SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES.
- SUSTAINING THE GOVERNOR’S YELLOW RIBBON TASK FORCE.
- SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE TRANSITION SERVICES.
- ENHANCING SERVICE MEMBER AND VETERAN ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION.
- ESTABLISHING A “*YELLOW RIBBON COMMUNITY*” CAMPAIGN TO TRAIN KEY COMMUNITY LEADERS ACROSS MINNESOTA.

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**THE COMMISSIONERS OF MINNESOTA STATE AGENCIES ARE COMMITTED**

**TO:**

- SUSTAIN REINTEGRATION AND “*BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON*” TRAINING PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE (BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER).
- PROVIDING ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS AND RESOURCES TO WORK GROUPS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS.
- CREATING NEW INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND OUR SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO MINNESOTA’S SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES.
- REVISING POLICY TO EASE ACCESS TO MINNESOTA’S ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES.
- SUPPORTING LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE TRANSITION SERVICES TO SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES IN MINNESOTA.

**MINNESOTA’S LEGISLATIVE LEADERS ARE COMMITTED TO:**

- CREATING VETERAN FRIENDLY LEGISLATION THAT RECOGNIZES THE SACRIFICE AND NEEDS OF SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.
- BUILDING “*YELLOW RIBBON COMMUNITIES*” IN THEIR DISTRICT.

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- ENHANCING SERVICE MEMBER AND VETERAN ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION.
- SUSTAINING AND IMPROVING STATE-BASED SERVICES FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS.
- EXTENDING EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION AND EMPLOYER RECOGNITION TO FAMILIES.
- REMOVING BARRIERS TO MILITARY FAMILIES IN ACCESSING STATE AND LOCAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES.

**1440 – INTRO BENEDICTION (MAJ. GEN. (BVT.) (RET.) SIEBEN**

THANK YOU. FOR THE BENEDICTION, PLEASE WELCOME BACK CHAPLAIN (COLONEL) VERN ANDERSON.

**1440 BENEDICTION (CH (LTC) ANDERSON)**

**<BENEDICTION>**

**1442 – CONCLUSION / OFFICIAL PHOTO/ MEDIA OPPORTUNITY**

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THANK YOU CHAPLAIN ANDERSON. AFTER OUR OFFICIAL PHOTO, AT THE PODIUM, WE INVITE QUESTIONS ON THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT FROM THE MEDIA – GOVERNOR PAWLENTY, SECRETARY GEREN, GENERAL BLUM, AND GENERAL SHELLITO WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONS.

**<OFFICIAL PHOTO>**

THANKS, AT THIS TIME WE WELCOME QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS.

**<MEDIA QUESTIONS>**

THANK YOU, THAT CONCLUDES THE MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COVENANT.

**<END>**